

DeFazio won partnership designation for Oregon schools in 2005

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EUGENE, OR—U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio applauded a Department of Transportation (DOT) decision to give a University Transportation Center (UTC) grant of \$3.5 million to Portland State University (PSU), the University of Oregon (UO), the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT), and the University of Utah (UT). The grant will continue vital transportation research and technology innovation. DeFazio sent the DOT a letter in support of partnership's grant request.

In 2005, DeFazio secured language in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) designating four Oregon universities as a UTC.

"The U.S. Department of Transportation has recognized the incredible work being done by this UTC," said DeFazio. "In 2005, I designated funds in SAFETEA-LU, a federal surface transportation bill, to create this UTC. It has been on the cutting edge of transportation innovation and advanced research. This grant will continue the UTC's work to improve the transportation infrastructure that is vital to our economic competitiveness here in Oregon and across the country."

BACKGROUND

The UTC program was created in 1988 to meet the nation's need for the safe, efficient and environmentally sound movement of people and goods through research, education, and technology transfer. Participating universities are involved in a variety of advanced and applied research ranging from intelligent transportation systems and fuel-efficient vehicle deployment to innovations that will improve passenger safety and reduce traffic and freight congestion. National UTCs are expected to provide national leadership in advancing research and technology solutions to America's transportation challenges.

SAFETEA-LU established 59 UTCs including Oregon's collaborative. SAFETEA-LU expired on September 30, 2009, and has been extended eight times by Congress. Both chambers of Congress are currently working on an updated legislation for a multi-year surface transportation bill.

Until that happens, the DOT developed a competitive grant program for one year to extend UTCs and their research. They established 20 UTC consortia centers including two that will focus on public transportation issues. Applicants needed to demonstrate research in areas that support one or more of the strategic goals including safety, economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, state of good repair, and livable communities.

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